3rd March 1958]

School Assistants of B.T. grade

* 30 *Q.*—SRI MOHAMED RAZA KHAN (on behalf of Sri V. R. Ranganathan) : Will the Hon. the Minister for Finance be pleased to state—

(*a*) the number of posts of School Assistants of B.T. Grade, permanent and temporary, sanctioned for Government institutions, viz., secondary schools including middle schools and training schools for this State;

(*b*) whether any post remained vacant on 1st July 1957; and

(*c*) if so, the number of such posts and the reasons therefor?

THE HON. SRI M. BHAKTAVATSALAM (on behalf of the Hon. the Minister for Finance) : (*a*) 548, Sir.

(*b*) & (*c*) About 36 posts remained vacant on 1st July 1957 owing to the deputation of teachers for re-training in Basic Education and dearth of qualified hands for appointment. Most of the vacant posts were filled in subsequently.

SRI JOHN ASIRVATHAM : May I know the provision made for those who were on leave or under training and the children who went without any instruction at all?

THE HON. SRI M. BHAKTAVATSALAM : The hon. Member may put a separate question.

Highways Department

* 31 *Q.*—SRI T. PURUSHOTHAM : Will the Hon. the Minister for Public Works be pleased to state whether there is any proposal before the Government to amalgamate the Highways Department with the Public Works Department, and if so, the stage at which the matter now stands?

THE HON. SRI P. KAKKAN : A proposal to amalgamate the Highways Department with the Public Works Department is being examined. Details are being worked out.

SRI T. PURUSHOTHAM : As the Highways Department is a specially technical department, would the Government consider the question whether it would not impair the efficiency of the work connected with roads and bridges if the Highways Department is amalgamated with the Public Works Department?

THE HON. SRI P. KAKKAN : It will also be considered, Sir.

SRI V. V. RAMASWAMI : இம்மாதிரி இரண்டு துறைகளையும் இணைப்பது என்றால், இரண்டு துறைகளின் தலைவர்களாகிய இரண்டு சீப் இன்ஜினியர்களுக்குப் பதிலாக ஒரு சீப் என்ஜினியர் வைத்துக்கொள்ளுவது என்று அர்த்தமா? ஹைவேஸ் டிபார்ட்மெண்டே இல்லாமல், பி. டபிள்யு. டி. ஜெனரல் சீப் என்ஜினியரையே தலைவராக வைத்துக்கொள்வது என்பது கொள்கையா என்று அறிய விரும்புகிறேன்.

[3rd March 1958

THE HON. SRI P. KAKKAN : இன்னும் இரண்டு டிபார்ட்மெண்டுகளையும் ஒன்றாக இணைப்பது பற்றி ஒரு முடிவுக்கு வரவில்லை. அதற்குள்ளாக ஒரு சீப் இன்ஜினியரை வைத்துக்கொள்ளுவதா என்ற பிரச்னை எழவில்லை என்று தெரிவித்துக்கொள்கிறேன்.

SRI P. T. RAJAN : Will the Hon. Minister be pleased to give an opportunity to this House to have its say before the Government come to any definite conclusion in the matter?

THE HON. SRI P. KAKKAN : Certainly, after the Government come to a conclusion, the House will be informed about it. (Laughter.)

SRI P. T. RAJAN : Perhaps I have not made myself clear, Sir. Will the Hon. Minister be pleased to consult this House before he comes to a conclusion in this matter?

THE HON. SRI P. KAKKAN : We cannot consult the House before coming to a decision. We are examining the question departmentally. We will disclose the final decision when it is reached.

Arannmore Palace in Ootacamund

* 32 *Q*.—SRI MOHAMED RAZA KHAN : Will the Hon. the Minister for Finance be pleased to state—

(*a*) whether it is a fact that the Arannmore Palace in Ootacamund has been purchased by the Government;

(*b*) if so, at what price; and

(*c*) how it is proposed to be used?

THE HON. SRI M. BHAKTAVATSALAM (on behalf of the Hon. the Minister for Finance) : (*a*) The Government are considering the purchase of the entire Arannmore Palace at Ootacamund.

(*b*) The matter is still in the stage of negotiation.

(*c*) The question as to the use to which the building should be put will be considered by the Government after its purchase.

SRI V. CHAKKARAI CHETTY : Will the Hon. Minister be pleased to state whether the idea in purchasing the palace is to accommodate the royal personnel and high dignitaries visiting the place?

THE HON. SRI M. BHAKTAVATSALAM : I may assure the hon. Member that it is not at all the idea of the Government that this palace should be purchased by the Government and used as a palace.